1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

of the tears, the two women each took a branch of a small tree and fought the man who had struck the child. The other members of the hamlet thought that the man got what he deserved.

Another time, Bak, a little girl of about ten, took some leaves from Bolut's banana tree, and he scolded her because he thought the destruction of the leaves would weaken his tree. Bak's adopted mother, Brakko, with whom she lived, took her part. Brakko had recently given Bolut some bananas for a feast which he was to hold in the near future. When she heard of the scolding he had given her adopted daughter, she remarked to a group of people, "Ah, yes, he scolds Bak, but why did he take my bananas to his hamlet then?" The remark was promptly carried to Bolut, and he as promptly returned the bananas. Brakko had taken Bak's part by her allusion to Bolut's having accepted a gift from her. Bolut's feelings had been hurt by this allusion, and he vindicated himself by returning the gift. The incident was soon forgotten. In most personal quarrels with his adult relatives the child does not lack a defender. On the other hand, when the children offend the whole community, there is no defence for them. Some youngsters picked unripe fruit from a tree, and all the adults of the hamlet who were present, male and female, scolded the children, who hurriedly ran back to the bush and threw the unripe fruit away.

Just one manner of frightening children was observed. It is done with a leaf called *grippo*, which is linked with ghosts who are feared by everyone. The leaf is waved in front of the child and an allusion made to ghosts. I was unable to get any further information on it. When observing the children's fear of this leaf, it seemed to me that it was similar to the fear a child in our society will sometimes have of a feather. The use of the leaf in this connection was not very frequent, and the frightening of the children by connecting the leaf with ghosts was half playful.

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

754 necessary spell over the remains of some food (taro, fish, banana, or betel-nut) which the man whose death is desired has half eaten. The same spell will be effective if made over the faeces of the man whose end is willed. It is for this reason, as well as for the desire for cleanliness, that at the end of a feast the remains of food are always thrown into the sea, and great precaution is taken never to leave faeces where anyone will see it.

754 If it is known that a man has made black magic, his life
627 is in danger. For the relatives of the dead man will be out
602 for revenge. I was told, for instance, about a man named Kolulu who was thought to have caused the death of a man through black magic. The dead man's clan relatives later fought and killed Kolulu. This happened a few years before my arrival.

754 One method of detecting who has made black magic is to employ the services of another magician. Some of the hair of the person who has presumably been killed by black magic is given to a magician, who makes a spell over the hair, calling upon the ghosts (*tinuato*) of his dead clan relatives to help him.[1] They are supposed to find the man who made the black magic, and then to cause worms to enter his stomach and come out in his faeces. This will be found out, and everyone will then know who has made the black magic. During my visit this method was used once to my knowledge. Ongas' maternal nephew, a young child named after him, had died. Ongas was convinced that the death was due to black magic. He therefore went to see Ulak, a man living about sixty miles south of Lesu,

775 [1] In a few other spells (mainly fishing magic) there are also invocations to the ghosts of the dead clan relatives to assist the magician. Exactly how the ghosts are to assist I was unable to find out, and the natives seem to have no theory about it. They call upon the ghosts to help them, but exactly the way the ghosts are to do this is no more clear to the Melanesian than the exact way in which the Lord is supposed to bring about the answer to an earnest Christian's prayer is plain to the latter.

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

two groups, the Eagle and the Hawk, is an identification with two symbols of the natural world, the ever-present sea and the bush. In the clan organization a smaller group of people are identified with a piece of land, a very concrete symbol of the material world. The *gas*, or spirit double of each individual, dwelling on the clan land might be considered a projection of the individual's ego into the super-ego.

So close is the identification of the individual native with his natural world through his totemic moiety, his clan, his *gas*, that these supernatural beliefs form a part of his everyday life, and are considered by him in no way different from any of his other knowledge. There is no more rationalization in the one than in the other, and neither is one more esoteric than the other.

This unconscious identification with the world is not the whole of religion. There are outlets for the emotions and for more or less mystical experiences. The dance is one of these outlets. One has only to look at the seriousness, the exaltation, and the complete inner absorption on the dancers' faces to know that here is a religious experience. More concretely, the native's serious attitude to the dance, his months of earnest preparations for it, indicate that it is no idle or merely amusing pastime. And the dance is held at all crises in the life of the individual, involving awe or fear. These occasions are birth, initiation of boys, first menses of the girls, marriage, and death. At all these rites *de passage* the individual also identifies himself with a group by coming together with its members at a feast.

THEORIES OF AFTER LIFE

The native's beliefs about after life and his identification with it are not so clear. A ghost is supposed to emerge from the mouth of the dying individual, to continue living in some

1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

775 vague unknown manner after the individual dies. In this way the Melanesian meets the eternal problem centred around the fear of oblivion at death. The same Melanesian constructs no theory of rewards and punishments in after life. For these he quite consciously finds in this life in the acquirement or non-acquirement of prestige. However, the magical spells give some evidence that there may have been in the past a more coherent theory of after life which has since been lost. At least this is one of many possibilities. In the war and fishing magic particularly there are invocations to the ghosts of dead clan relatives to assist in fishing and in weakening the enemy. As if to reward or pay back the same ghosts after a fishing expedition, some taro and fish are left in the *liga* for them. The smallness of the quantity left makes the act an obviously symbolic one. From the magic it would therefore seem that the Lesu man believes that the ghosts of his clan members live on indefinitely, and are able and willing to assist him if properly invoked. Whether this is a remnant of an ancient ancestor cult cannot be determined from the present evidence. Mortuary rites, which would be expected to throw some light on this problem, give no help. For, to-day at least, the mortuary rites have no effect on the dead man, his ghost, his double, *gas*, or anything connected with him. They are held to gain prestige for the living survivors who make them.

MORTUARY RITES

164 These mortuary rites are no more religious than the rites on the occasions of birth, circumcision, first menses, marriage, and death. They have certain essentials, the dance and the feast, in common, and the same mental attitude underlies them all. They are, therefore, all religious in an equal degree, but since all except the mortuary rites have been described in another context only the latter are given here.

2:Powdermaker E-5 (1929-30)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

and is divided into hamlets. The village of Lesu, where the writer lived, has 222 inhabitants living in fifteen hamlets. Each hamlet has its own cemetery and every native wants to be buried in the cemetery of the hamlet in which he was born.

Only the death of a very old person is considered normal. When a native who is not old dies (*i.e.*, one still able to work), his death is usually attributed to black magic. The rites are similar for all deaths, but at the death of an old person they are the most elaborate. The number of people at a funeral, the size of the feast, the elaborateness of the rites, are all graduated nicely to the age of the dead person.[2] If an infant is born dead there are no rites at all. It is buried immediately without feast or wailing. The funeral of a child takes place on the day of the death and is attended only by the people of the neighbouring hamlets. The funeral of a mature person, but not a very old one, will be held the day after death and will be a village affair, with some members of neighbouring villages there. The funeral of a very old person is a large inter-village affair, many people coming from quite distant settlements, and the body will be kept for two or three days before burial. The pattern at death is the same as it is during life. It is the old men and women who are the most important people and who are the leaders of the community.

While alive each person has a double called a *gas* which lives on the ground belonging to his totemic clan.[3] This *gas* is not seen by its living double, although there are rare occasions mentioned in folk tales when a man has met his *gas*. When a person dies his *gas* dies too. At the time of death there issues from the dying man, with his last breath, his *tinuato* or ghost, which has no connection with the *gas*. The *tinuato* dwells in the body while the native is alive and comes out only at his death, while the *gas* always dwells outside on the clan land and dies when the person dies. The *tinuato* or ghost continues to live, but its place of existence and manner of living are very vague. It belongs to the realm of the supernatural, about which no questions are asked. For a month or so after death

[2] Cf. Camilla H. Wedgwood, Death and Social Status in Melanesia, *J.R.A.I.*, Vol. LVII.

[3] *Vide* the writer's Report on Research in New Ireland, *Oceania*, I, 1931, 357.

2: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-30)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

the *tinuato* wanders around near the place of death and makes its presence known by a low whistle. Although it has no malignant qualities, it is regarded with great fear.

There is no belief in life after death (except for the ghost), in rewards or punishments, or in any deity. It is interesting to observe that for the missionised native it is the *tinuato* which goes to hell, and it is this also which has become the Christian soul.

These people, until very recently, were cannibals. All the adults of the community in which I lived had been cannibals before the white government stopped the practice. But it was only the bodies of enemies killed in warfare which were eaten, and never the body of a friend, relative, or member of the same village. As far as could be ascertained, there was no theory of imbibing the strength of the enemy warrior. It was merely another meat dish in a diet which was mostly vegetable.[4]

Cremation rather than burial was formerly practised, but as far as could be learned there has been no change in the rites. In the past the body was burned and the bones buried. The cemeteries existed then just as they do to-day—each hamlet with its own. In the rites to-day cremation is simply omitted and the whole body is buried instead of just the bones, as in the past.[5]

The following description, covering the three chronological periods, brings out the divisions among the survivors who are grouped according to their kinship to the dead person, their degree of mourning and their responsibility for the rites.

PREPARATIONS BEFORE DEATH

In the period immediately preceding death there is even then a selection of certain relatives who will perform special duties towards the dying person. It is always the parents or children who take care of the sick person. Before death occurs, it is to the house of the parents or children that the patient is moved. The spouse is very attentive also, and the rest of the community show their interest by cooking in the hamlet of the sick person and by dis-

[4]However, one can never completely trust information gathered from hearsay only, and with no opportunity to observe the phenomenon itself.

[5]White control is responsible for the change.

2: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-30)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

EMOTIONAL ATTITUDES

121 Emotional attitudes are by their nature less easy to observe than rites. But one can, first, observe expressions of emotion, or lack of such expression; secondly, talk over the matter with the participants in the rites; and thirdly, listen to their own discussions. Also, because these are on the whole an extravert type of people, showing their emotions plainly, one can get more from observation than one could from a more reserved people. But even then the subject is a complicated one. When is an emotion real and when is it only a ritual expression? It may be both. How much of the emotion is spontaneous and how much is induced by the ritual? Motives may be very complex. Real grief may be mixed with the desire to do the proper thing and show off one's wealth at the mortuary rites of a loved relative. A sophisticated and introspective person of our own society is not always able to distinguish all the motives underlying his own actions. It is not to be expected that an ethnologist can answer all these questions for the native, but he may set down a series of careful observations.

761 During the period of illness immediately preceding death and during the burial rites, the survivors, as far as could be observed, 152 have no fear of any ghost or other supernatural element. Such emotions as fear, awe, etc., sometimes associated with death, appear to be completely lacking. It must be remembered in this connection [775] that these people have no belief in life after death. For two days I sat with a group of women about the bed of Pulong, a sick woman who was expected to die. Their conversation never turned to any of the supernatural aspects of death, but was always about some very concrete matter such as a medicine for the sick woman. Neither their conversation nor attitude indicated any other feeling except affectionate concern and sorrow. The parents, children and spouse show these feelings particularly. Ongas, the husband of Pulong, the woman just mentioned, sat with bent head in front of the house and neither ate nor talked. There was no mistaking his real sorrow. The rest of the community seemed not to be affected by such deep emotions. The members of the neighbouring hamlets came and cooked in the compound of the sick person, but there was the usual

2:Powdermaker E-5 (1929-30)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

761 152 There is vexation caused by the loss of a worker. The annoyance over the economic loss is felt both by the clan relatives and by the rest of the community. A large amount of work is done communally and so the loss of a worker is of real consequence. The surviving clan relatives have one less person to assist them in the making of a *malaŋgon*, a ritual feast, or any other rite in which the members of the clan co-operate. The village as a whole also feels the loss of one person in their communal work, such as the preparations for the feasts at circumcision rites, and other rites in which all the members of the village co-operate. At the death of a young man Wakatei, his mother's sister's son, Lungam, who was in charge of the rites, was in a really bad temper owing to the fact that the dead man was young and a good worker and the death was a real economic loss to himself. At Kawitti's death the same element of economic loss entered into the sorrow. She was a middle-aged woman and had always been zealous in contributing her share of taro, and industrious in preparing it for the village feasts. Many members of the community told me (spontaneously, without any questioning on my part) how sorry they were about Kawitti's death, because she was such a good worker. The realization of an economic loss is openly expressed, as was the case with Lungam, and also with the rest of the community. There is no need for any hypocrisy, such as, " we loved him for himself alone."

• 775 152 It is not until after the burial rites that the element of fear enters into the emotional attitude. There is now the fear of a ghost or *tinuato*, mentioned in the beginning of this paper. After the burial of the body, it is supposed to wander around near its former habitation and to make its presence known by a low whistle. The native is very much afraid of this ghost and gives as the reason that the ghost is untrue and unreal. It has no malignant qualities and the dread seems to be based purely on the fact that it is uncanny. But there are no rites to lay the ghost, nor any rites of which the function is to alleviate fear. The fact, however, that all the members of the extended family sleep in the one hamlet after the burial rites may tend to lessen the fear. If they are together, they will not be as fearful as if separated, but this does not keep them from being afraid at other times, nor does it lay the ghost. Several weeks

2:Powdermaker E-5 (1929-30)1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

after Kawitti's death the chief, Ongas, one of those observing sleeping taboos, started off to another village about four miles away to see a relative. He returned in about half an hour, very much out of breath and quite scared because he had heard a low whistle, which he believed indicated the presence of Kawitti's ghost. He hurried home and did not leave the hamlet for several days. The fear is particularly active for several months after death and then diminishes, to be replaced by the fear of the ghost of the next person who dies. The ghost is never laid and the fear never completely absent. However, no emotion can persist with the same degree of intensity over any long period of time, and as the grief is spent and new interests come up, the fear of the ghost is put in the background. The situation which called up the ghost has been taken care of by certain rites and no longer exists. As the situation is shelved, so too is the ghost which accompanies it, even though there were no definite rites to accomplish this.[14]

THE FUNCTION OF RITES

The mortuary rites have a double function. They serve both to differentiate the groups of survivors and to provide a means of expression for their emotions. The various taboos set off one group of mourners from another and from the rest of the community. Food taboos set apart the chief mourners—the immediate family—from the others, and in the same way the sleeping customs and sexual taboos involved set off the extended family from the rest of the community. The taboo on dance rehearsals after the burial applies to the whole community. The importance of the taboo is in proportion to the degree of grief experienced by the survivors. It is obvious that food and sex are of more significance than dance rehearsals. Abstinence from eating taro and from sexual inter-

[14]An interesting psychoanalytic interpretation of the ghost has been suggested by Dr. George Daniels, to whom I am indebted for reading the manuscript and making several suggestions. The ambivalence of any close attachment is well known, *i.e.*, both love and hate would be a part of any deep attachment. In order to break the attachment both these emotional attitudes have to be detached from the object. The first (love) comes out in grief. The negative feeling comes out after the discharge of grief in the ritualistic mourning, in the form of fear, or a projection of their own feeling of guilt on account of the ambivalence of their attitude.